Community Contact

Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs

March/April 2010

For and About Local Government Development

Rural Roots Dance Troupe Performs at Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics 2

Northerners Attend 2010 Growing Local Conference

Northern Agriculture Program Promoted 4

Workshop Highlights Public Sector Accounting Changes 5

Safety and Health Focus for Public Works Staff 6

Trench Cages Support Safe Work in ANA Communities 7

Domestic Violence: A Northern Perspective 8

Northern Manitoba RCMP Ride High on Rails 10

UCN Constable Training Produces New Graduates

Profile 11

Municipal Calendar for April and May 2010 12

Olympic Dreams Come True for Asham Stompers

The Asham Stompers (front row left to right) Jacob Harris, Cindy Lavalee, Michael Harris; (middle row left to right) Franklin Mousseau – musician, Dawn Flett, Ashley Campbell, Felicia Morrisseau, Darlene Hunter, Shawn Mousseau – musician; (back row left to right) Grant Thompson, Patrick McKay, Glen Murdock, Arnold Asham.

Manitoba

This Issue

Welcome to the March/April *Community Contact* newsletter.

Rural Roots Da

Performs at Vanc Winter Olympics

The Asham Stompers dance at the LiveCity downtown venue during the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games.

The Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver were a long way from home for Felicia Morrisseau, who grew up in the Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (ANA) community of Crane River. Felicia is a member of the Asham Stompers, a dance troupe featuring some of Manitoba's best Metis and Aboriginal cultural dancers. The Stompers are now proud to say they performed at the 2010 Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver.

No ordinary dance troupe, the Asham Stompers are passionate about demonstrating and celebrating Metis culture. During the recent Winter Olympics, they appeared at Manitoba's provincial pavilion, the Four Host Nations Pavilion, the Aboriginal Artisan and Business Showcase, the BC Hydro Showcase and Vancouver's LiveCity Downtown venue. Along with established dances, they performed a routine developed especially for the Olympic appearances.

Arnold Asham established the Asham Stompers in 2002, to celebrate and demonstrate the dancing and the fiddle music of his Metis culture. The troupe features dancers from Reedy Creek, Crane River and Cayer, as well as from the Peguis and Ebb and Flow First Nations. The Stompers have appeared throughout Manitoba and Canada, performing their famous Red River Jigs and high-energy square dancing. Arnold, who was born in Reedy Creek, also owns Asham Curling Supplies, provider of curling shoes, clothing and other essential gear to many of the world's best curlers, Canada's Olympians included.

Growing up in Crane River and involved in dancing and performing with community dance troupes since the age of four, Felicia now lives in Winnipeg

nce Troupe

ouver 2010

and works as an administrative secretary. She joined the Asham Stompers in 2005. She says it was a great honour to perform with the Stompers at the 2010 Winter Olympics. "I am proud to represent my community, province, country and the Metis culture," she said. "A big thank you goes to Arnold Asham, of the Asham Stompers, for making this possible."

In July 2009, dance troupe members travelled to Vancouver so they could audition to perform during the Winter Olympic Games. The news of their acceptance to perform at the games in Vancouver came later that year in September. According to Arnold Asham, the Stompers had worked on being ready for the audition for two years. Naturally, there was much anxious excitement while awaiting the good news.

"Never underestimate the importance of recapturing and preserving your culture and heritage," said Felicia, directing the advice toward youth in particular. She and the Stompers set a terrific example for youth, working as hard on dance as athletes do on sport.

The Asham Stompers look forward to a busy summer with bookings throughout Manitoba and Saskatchewan. They also look forward to the Annual Asham Stomper Music and Dance Festival held in Reedy Creek, on the west side of Lake Manitoba, during the September long weekend.

To learn more about the Asham Stompers, including where they will be performing, visit their website at ashamstompers.com.

Felicia Morrisseau takes a minute to reflect on the experience.

Northerners Attend 2010 Growing Local Conference

This past February, the Northern Healthy Foods Initiative (NHFI) provided support to Food Matters Manitoba (FMM) to subsidize travel for northern presenters and community participants attending the 2010 Growing Local Conference in Winnipeg. The conference, hosted February 19 to 20 at the University of Winnipeg, featured a trade show supporting local food producers and community projects.

Food Matters Manitoba has hosted several forums of this type including the Northern Harvest Forum, held in Thompson. FMM hosts these forums to generate public awareness of Manitoba's food system. The forums provide opportunities for networking among participants and for growers and consumers to gain practical knowledge of how they can work toward a more just food system for all Manitobans.

A wide variety of presentations at the 2010 Growing Local Conference included:

* Teaching Food Security to Young People
* Home Goat Dairying
* Marketing Indigenous Foods Locally
* City Forks, Country Forks, Eat Well Guide
* Bridging the Gap Between Food Charity and Food Justice
* Bringing a Manitoba Product to Market

Presentations specific to northern food production included:

* Getting Things Growing Up North (NHFI Delegation)
* A northern fishery panel
* Choosing the Best Fruit Crops for Northern Manitoba

A dinner during the evening of February 19 featured produce from Manitoba growers. More than 20 participants attended from northern Manitoba communities. For more information on this and future conferences, visit the Food Matters Manitoba website at foodmattersmanitoba.ca or call 1-800-731-2638.

Northern Agriculture Program Promoted

Introduced in May 2009, the Northern Agriculture Program promotes and supports innovative agriculture and food production initiatives north of the 53rd parallel in Manitoba. The program is financed with $600,000 from the federal government and $250,000 from the provincial government through the federal-provincial Growing Forward partnership. Growing Forward is a national agriculture framework to co-ordinate federal and provincial agriculture policy. It supports flexible programs that are tailored to meet Manitoba's diverse regional requirements.

The Northern Agriculture Program is designed to encourage agricultural production through education and technology development. It can also provide financial and technical support to qualified applicants with innovative plans to develop, test and launch livestock and crop production systems. An important goal is to create and develop marketing opportunities that will make fresh, locally produced foods accessible to remote communities.

The program is managed by Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives (MAFRI) staff through its Northern Growing Opportunities (GO) Offices which promote:

* agriculture in northern climates
* food processing, preservation and storage
* marketing and business development

The Northern Agriculture Program works in partnership with the Northern Healthy Foods Initiative to address food security issues in the north.

Who qualifies:

* residents of Northern Manitoba
* northern agriculture producers
* northern partnerships, co-operatives and corporations
* northern First Nations councils and Aboriginal and Northern Affairs community councils

Eligible costs:

Funds are available for sustainable, northern agriculture developments that increase local food production and processing in Manitoba. Examples would include:

- food production systems
- food processing and preservation methods
- new options in crop and livestock production
- new production systems that extend the growing season
- new marketing systems that increase regional accessibility and affordability for northern-produced foods

Applications are available:

Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives
Northern Growing Opportunities (GO) Office
Box 103 – 59 Elizabeth Drive
Thompson, Manitoba R8N 1X4
Phone: 204-281-2000
E-mail: Allen.Muggaberg@gov.mb.ca
Online: manitoba.ca/agriculture

Workshop Highlights Public Sector Accounting Changes

Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs hosted a provincial Community Administrative Officer Workshop at the Canad Inns, Polo Park in Winnipeg on February 2 to 4, 2010. More than two dozen participants represented communities from ANA Northern and North Central Regions. Deputy minister Harvey Bostrom and executive director Freda Albert opened the workshop, greeting participants and wishing them a successful, productive and fun session.

The workshop theme was *Accounting for the Future*. The theme was well-represented on the first day with all-day discussions about compliance with Public Sector Accounting Board (PSAB) changes. Workshop presentations included practical work administered by Angel Anderson, ANA municipal audit and tax manager, and Kien Goh, a private consultant under contract to help with PSAB change implementation. The opening day lunch hour featured a presentation on Community Economic Development.

The second day opened with an Organization and Staff Development Workshop on *Managing Personal and Work Related Stress*. Participants received ideas and tools to help them recognize stress and deal with it successfully. The afternoon of the second day included more information and practical work concerning PSAB change implementation in ANA communities. Future regional workshops in Thompson and Winnipeg will provide more information on the topic.

The final day wrapped up with presentations titled:

- Delivering Effective Presentations
- Workplace Health and Safety
- Capital Information
- Contract Employee Relationships
- Changes to the *Election Officials Handbook*

Executive director Freda Albert and Jean Merasty, acting director for ANA's Northern Region, provided their closing remarks.

More than two dozen participants from ANA Northern and North Central Regions attended the February 2010 Community Administrative Officer Workshop held in Winnipeg.

Safety and Health Focus
for Public Works Staff

This year's public works employee workshop location was Lake Manitoba Narrows Lodge about 50 kilometres east of Dauphin.

The North Central region of Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (ANA) hosted a highly successful three days of workshops for public works employees on January 18 – 20, 2010 at Lake Manitoba Narrows Lodge about 50 kilometres east of Dauphin. Sixteen public works employees attended.

This year's workshop focused on Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) issues and legislative requirements for water, wastewater and solid waste facilities. Karen Barker, North Central director for ANA Local Government Development provided opening remarks. The three days of training looked at the following:

Day 1:

- Workplace Hazardous Material Information System (WHMIS) refresher and transportation of dangerous goods
- trench cage assembly

Technical and public works consultants from the ANA North Central office demonstrated trench cage assembly. ANA has purchased four sets of trench cages. The cages are required for excavations over 1.5 metres in depth. Trench cages are stored in Waterhen and Bissett for the North Central Region and in Sherridon and Wabowden for the Northern Region. Communities can contact their regional technical and public works consultants to request the use of trench cage equipment.

Day 2:

- confined space awareness
- accident reporting, near misses and thermal stress
- hands-on presentation on electrical safety and proper use of test meters
- water sampling review
- wastewater treatment lagoons operating guidelines, sampling procedures and licenses under *The Environment Act*
- waste disposal grounds regulations, operating permits, recycling information and the upcoming waste reduction and recycling support levy (WRARS)

Day 3:

- professional development training by Assiniboine Community College on dealing with difficult people — with a focus on defusing confrontations with angry, upset customers

Recommendations for future training included:

- basic plumbing, pumps and electricity
- troubleshooting water treatment plants
- operating heavy machinery

With a plan to repeat the success of this year's workshop next year, ANA North Central region is now working on hosting a 2010/11 workshop using the same location.

Trench Cages Support Safe Work in ANA Communities

The trench cages recently purchased by Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (ANA) and demonstrated at the January public works workshop are now available for use by communities. After motor vehicle collisions and falls, incidents involving confined spaces are the leading cause of workplace injuries and fatalities.

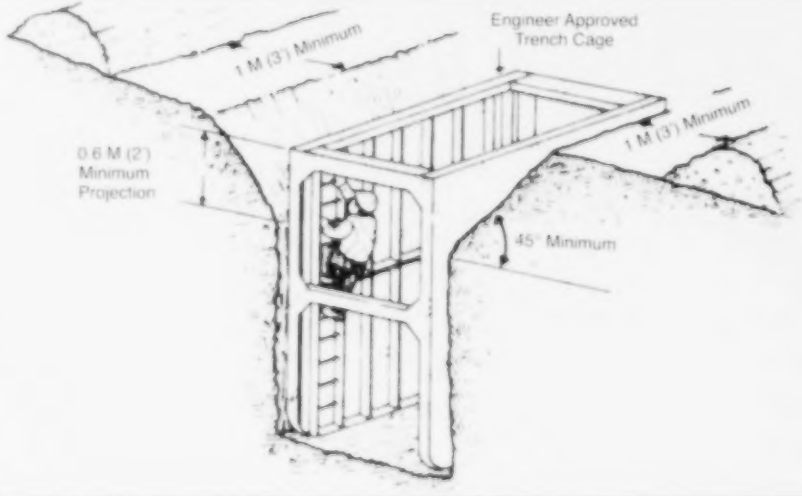
The *Workplace Safety and Health Act*, Part 26 of the *Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health Regulation, M.R. 217/2006*, and the Manitoba Safe Work publication *Guideline for Excavation Work* give workers and employers information on the potential hazards involved in excavation work, encouraging them to work together to create a safe, injury-free worksite.

Communities and contractors need to take specific actions when planning and performing excavation work. Before beginning work, they need to obtain information on legal requirements, hazards to workers near excavation sites, support systems, shaft and tunnel excavations, deep foundation excavations and soil properties. Guidelines must be obtained and followed to manage the risks involved.

ANA technical and public works consultants (TPWC) can help you plan and execute a safe excavation project. ANA has a *Trench Box Installation* video that can be borrowed free of charge to help you with properly installing a trench cage. ANA has four portable aluminum trench cages available for loan to communities. Contact your regional TPWC to request the use of a trench cage or to get help with planning your excavation.

Communities carrying out an excavation must register themselves as excavation contractors with the Provincial Workplace Safety and Health division and get a serial number for each specific excavation project that will be in excess of 1.5 metres (5 feet) deep.

If a council hires an outside contractor, they must ensure that the contractor is a registered excavation contractor and has obtained a serial number for each specific excavation project. All excavators need to phone Manitoba Hydro's Call Before You Dig line at 204-480-1212 or 1-888-624-9376 to locate underground utilities before beginning excavation work.



Using an engineer-approved trench cage to shore up excavations reduces the potential for worker injury.

Domestic Violence

Stopping the cycle of domestic violence involves offering clients immediate safety and providing information that will help them make life-changing, independent decisions.

Though domestic violence occurs in all societies and in families at all levels of income, Aboriginal women, and northern women in particular, seem most vulnerable. Poverty, substance abuse, geographic isolation, overcrowding and loss of culture are factors that can contribute to the problem.

According to Canada's Minister of State responsible for the Status of Women, the spousal homicide rate among Aboriginal women is more than eight times that for non-Aboriginal women. Aboriginal women are also three times more likely to experience spousal violence than non-Aboriginal women.

Besides causing distress for the victims and children, negative affects of domestic violence can ripple through an entire community. It increases school absenteeism and uses substantial time and services from public emergency workers, the healthcare and legal systems. It also has a marked negative effect on workplaces through decreased employee morale, increased workplace absence and loss of business profitability.

There are currently only three federally funded women's shelters located on First Nations. These are in Pukatawagan, Koostatak (Fisher River First Nation) and Shamattawa. There are another ten provincially funded shelters in urban centres throughout the Manitoba. Callers who dial 1-877-977-0007 will be linked to the shelter nearest to them and they will be provided with information and support.

Jennifer Hagedorn, the co-ordinator for the Manitoba Association of Women's Shelters, a non-profit coalition of nine of these shelters, commented that shelters try to empower the women to make choices in their own lives.

"Some calls come from family members who are concerned," said Hagedorn. "Others call to end the isolation or to identify ways to protect themselves and their children. For some who decide to flee, transportation to the nearest shelter can be arranged."

When they arrive at a shelter, women receive information about domestic violence and supportive counselling from staff. Shelters do not require their clients to report to police. Instead, they focus on empowering the client to make such decisions on

A Northern Perspective

their own. Resources within the shelter offer children who have experienced trauma help in dealing with it. If the client wishes to relocate or obtain a protection order, the shelter staff will help with advice and resources.

Shelter workers know the cultural issues Aboriginal families face. They often have unique insight because they live in the community or in a nearby community. Shelter staff are also encouraged to take part in ongoing training that helps them provide respectful and culturally appropriate services when they apply their own life and work experiences on the job.

"Northern shelters work very closely with collateral agencies to provide the most effective service possible," said Leslie Tucker, director of The Thompson Crisis Centre, adding that they are committed to eradicating domestic violence and they educate the public about the problem whenever possible.

Domestic Violence: A Major Concern

* A study involving seven First Nations in Northern Manitoba reported that over 70 per cent of the women and 50 per cent of the men claimed they had been abused. Of these, 19 per cent said they had been abused, once, 22 per cent weekly, six per cent monthly, and 53 per cent once in a while. Seventy-six per cent said that some or all of their family members had experienced abuse (Thomlinson, Erickson and Cook, 2000).

Shelters help children deal with trauma, too.

* The study also estimated that, at a minimum, one-quarter of Aboriginal women experience violence at the hands of an intimate partner. They also indicate that, in some communities, that figure can be as high as eighty or ninety percent.
* Children living with an abused mother are 12 to 14 times greater risk of suffering sexual abuse by the mother's partner and they are seven times more likely to report sexual abuse occurring outside the home (McCloskey, Figuerdo and Koss, 1995).

Resources

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence, don't wait to get help and advice. Connect with a provincial shelter by calling 1-877-977-0007.

Other resources include:

* a local RCMP officer or Band Constable
* a nursing station
* a Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program (NADAP) worker
* a social service agency
* if criminal charges are involved, Manitoba Justice provides victim services.

Two Internet websites where you can learn more about domestic violence are: mawo.mb.ca and shelternet.ca.

Northern Manitoba RCMP Ride High on Rails

Manitoba RCMP now have the only two high rail police vehicles in Canada to help them in their work across the north of our province. The first vehicle was located in Gillam, a community that grew up southwest of the Kettle Rapids hydroelectric generating station on the Nelson River. The second vehicle is now situated in Thompson.

Based on a truck frame, the new police cruisers feature specialized hardware designed to allow them to use normal roads or quickly adjust to move onto tracks and use the railway lines. The police rail vehicles allow better access to many communities in the North such as Thicket Portage and Pikwitonei where road access is seasonal or non-existent.

RCMP members completed a two-day high rail course to learn the Canadian Rail Operating Rules of the railway. Completion of the course is required before Transport Canada can allow anyone to operate a high rail vehicle on any rail line in Canada. RCMP officers are no exception when it comes to the special knowledge required to use railway tracks safely.

The new vehicles have been a great help to RCMP from Thompson in serving communities along this rail line. In the past, officers responding to emergency calls or conducting inland patrols to many communities along the rail line would have to fly in or wait for winter roads to be open before they could drive in during the winter months. In recent years, a trend to warmer, shorter winters has seen winter road seasons growing even shorter.

Since flying to many northern communities requires a float or ski equipped light plane, air travel is normally not possible during fall when ice is forming on lakes or in spring when it is melting. Freeze up and break up are also times when winter roads are unavailable. Even when air travel is an option, it depends on weather. If the weather is poor, RCMP must wait, sometimes for several days.

High rail vehicles allow RCMP members reliable access to communities in almost any weather conditions. But before they travel on the rails, they must first communicate with rail traffic controllers (RTC) in Montreal to see if there are any trains coming from the north or south. Once they get a track occupancy permit (TOP), they can place the high rail truck on the rail line. From Thompson, they can drive to either Pikwitonei or Thicket Portage on rails in under two hours.

At their destination, RCMP members can disengage the high rail equipment allowing them to drive the truck normally to go where they need to be in the community. Using the specialized vehicles, RCMP members from Thompson and Gillam are now able to respond faster and on a more regular basis, with improved access to almost two dozen communities that are next to or accessible from the rail lines connecting the two centres.

Railroad companies have used high rail vehicles for many years. Now the vehicles will allow "D" Division RCMP members improved opportunities to enforce laws, investigate crimes and reinforce police community relations, helping keep Northern Manitobans secure.

"D" Division RCMP members are now qualified to use new high rail police vehicles to get to remote communities along the rail lines.

UCN Constable Training Produces New Graduates

This February 8 to 26, 2010, University College of the North (UCN) presented a three-week Band and Community Constable Training course for a second time. The graduating class included 28 constables from 14 First Nations and three Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (ANA) communities.

The graduates are (front row) Randal Guimond, Brent Bighetty, Genevieve Caribou, Flora Jane Denechezhe, Cindy Jacobson, Doreen Wood, Bernadette Wood, Happy Jack Garrioch, Florence Keeper; (middle row) Jack McDougall, James Brass, Isaac Laponsee, Francis Conrad Munroe, Sean Clayton Colon, Vincent McKay, Alex Queskekapow, Lorne Wood, Peter Cromarty, Norman Pascal, Luke Keno; (back row) Adrian Laponsee, Ron Fontaine, Donald Tssessaze, Johnny Cromarty, Leroy Dunsford, Rory Settee, Victor Sinclair, John Evans, Christopher Wood.

Graduates representing ANA communities are Isaac Laponsee of Brochet, Cindy Jacobson of Cormorant and Lorne Wood of Bissett/Manigotagan/Seymourville.

Profile

Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (ANA) introduces a new employee and appoints an acting director.

Ron Bruneau

Ron is a new technical and public works consultant with a focus on workplace safety and health. Ron is based in the ANA Local Government Development Division northern region office located in Thompson.

Born and raised in Lac du Bonnet, Ron and his wife moved to Pine Falls where he worked for the Tembec pulp and paper mill for the past 24 years. During his time at the paper mill in Pine Falls, Ron developed a winter rescue program now used by paper mills across Canada.

In his spare time, Ron is a Red Cross First Aid and automated external defibrillator (AED) instructor. He also enjoys doing home renovations and taking tropical vacations with his family.

Jean Merasty

In March 2007, Community Contact introduced Jean as the new assistant to ANA Local Government Development Division (LGDD) executive director, Freda Albert. Now we are pleased to announce Jean's most recent posting as acting director for ANA's LGDD Northern Region office in Thompson.

Born and raised in Brochet, Jean is a member of the Barren Lands First Nation. She is the mother of three girls and a son as well as being a proud grandmother. Arriving in Thompson in 1986, she earned a diploma in Business Administration and a certificate in Business Skills Integrated from Keewatin Community College. Recent education includes pursuing a Bachelor of Management degree via distance education.

Jean's experiences include working with Keewatin Tribal Council as a property manager for the Urban Native Housing Program, as an office manager with NorMan Regional Development and as an administrative assistant with University College of the North.

Municipal Calendar Monthly Reminder for April and May 2010

April 2010

- Deadline for receipt of any property tax payments to department to avoid penalties.
- GOOD FRIDAY
- Management Maintenance Systems (MMS) -Service mowers and trimmers.
- EASTER MONDAY
- Submit quarterly GST refund.
- Deadline for receipt of payment to Receiver General to avoid penalty.
- Close books for year-end and start to prepare files and schedules for audit, usually due by June to the audit firm.
- Submit year-end financial statement.
- April 22 – 23: Capturing Opportunities will be held in Brandon (Keystone Centre).
- All communities must submit the March 31, 2010 year-end financial statement by the end of the month.
- Finalize capital project applications for Capital Approval Board. Deadline is first Monday in May.
- Submit Municipal Employee Benefits Program (MEBP) form and payment no later than seven working days after the last pay period.
- If applicable, submit bi-weekly payrolls for Building Independence Program to regional office.

OSH Reminders

- Council to ensure fire extinguishers and first aid kits inspected.
- Council to action items highlighted as corrective action from inspections.
- Council to conduct annual fire drills, ensure maintenance of fire extinguishers and ensure smoke detectors are in working order.

May 2010

- Deadline for receipt of any property tax payments to department to avoid penalties.
- **MMS** – Isolate lagoon cells.
- Deadline for capital project applications.
- **MMS** – Isolate lagoon cells.
- **MMS** - Crawl space vents opened.
- **MMS** - Heat traces turned off.
- **MMS** - Recirculation pumps turned off.
- Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation to reply to requests made March 15 for grant-in-aid.
- **MMS** - Lagoon samples sent out.
- **MMS** - Minimum two weeks isolation for lagoon.
- Deadline for receipt of payment to Receiver General to avoid penalty.
- VICTORIA DAY
- May 18-20: Vision Quest to be held in Winnipeg at the Convention Centre.

Community

- Council to ensure election officials appointment bylaw in place in preparation for the regular election in October.
- Submit MEBP form and payment no later than seven working days after the last pay period.
- If applicable, submit bi-weekly payrolls for the Building Independence Program to regional office.

OSH Reminders

- Council to ensure fire extinguishers and first aid kits inspected.
- Council to action items highlighted as corrective action from inspections.
- Are your training records up to date?

Departmental

- Review of capital project applications for missing information during this month.
- Regional office will complete Municipal Cost Analysis (MCA) review by month end.

Community Contact

Paul Doolan, Editor
1680 Ellice Avenue, Bay 8
Winnipeg, MB R3H 0Z2
Ph: 204-945-2161
Toll free: 1-800-282-8069
Fax: 204-948-2389
E-mail: paul.doolan@gov.mb.ca
Web: manitoba.ca/ana

Community council members, community residents and departmental staff are strongly encouraged to submit feedback, comments, questions, suggestions and ideas to the editor.